

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace page 1, lines 4-8 with the following replacement paragraph:

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The present application is a continuation-in-part of commonly assigned copending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/644,377, now issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,898,189, which was filed on August 23, 2000, by Marco Di Benedetto, Ramana Mellacheruvu and Umesh Mahajan for a Restartable Spanning Tree for High Availability Network Systems and is hereby incorporated by reference.

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